

is but the pastime of an hour, while with the scientific collector it is the study of a lifetime.

As soon as a collector has passed through his novitiate in the primary class of the great school of Philately he should choose his field, and stick to it, unless, after a trial, he should find his selection injudicious and should believe that some other branch of Philately promises greater returns in the way of pleasure and learning.

Between specialism and generalism I cannot undertake to choose. Until very recently I was a rabid generalist and preached the doctrine on every possible occasion. But with the continual increase in the number of collectible varieties specialism is becoming more and more popular, and a systematic study of the stamps of all countries more and more difficult. It may be said, parenthetically, that a majority of those who collect with little apparent system are to be found in the ranks of the generalists. This fact, however, does not prove that a systematic study of the world's emissions is impossible. True, it is an herculean task and requires the expenditure of much time and money, yet, if one is really certain that he can devote a reasonable amount of both time and money to the study of the stamps of all countries he will certainly do well to attempt it. Generalists are quite inclined not only to collect the *postage* stamps of the whole world but the *revenue* and *telegraph* stamps (and even, sometimes the envelopes and cards), as well.

This is certainly running generalism into the ground. The *postage* stamps alone are sufficient to employ the attention of a student during his entire lifetime, and it is not politic to make your task so hard that you will shudder at the very thought of it.

The first point, therefore, is to decide exactly what shall be collected, and this decision is, perhaps, the most important step in the collecting career. The decision made, the collector finds his task mapped out before him and the consideration of ways and means next occupies his attention. I do not believe in the common method of buying the cheaper stamps first, mounting them in your album, and then purchasing the rarer varieties as fast as your purse will allow. I prefer to complete oneself before attempting the formation of another. In my collection I reverse the usual order by first completing the older sets, as far as possible, since in all printed albums the older sets are placed at the top of the page. When these are completed the hardest part of the work is over, and I can secure the stamps of modern issue with comparative ease. I never buy single stamps of a set, unless tempted by a great bargain and, as a rule, find it much cheaper to buy entire sets.

I am not one of those who preach one thing and practice another, and I can say from my own experience that since I have forsaken the haphazard, go-as-you-please method of collecting and experimented along the lines which I have attempted to describe in this article I have reaped far more Philatelic pleasure with less labor, yes, even less expenditure than ever before.

There is no valid reason for the lamentable lack of system which no one, acquainted with many Philatelists can fail to have noticed. The true cause, perhaps, that many Philatelic enthusiasts hold the pursuit so lightly, is that they do not fully realize the possibilities of the glorious future of Philately. They consider it the fad of a day,

but it will, I firmly believe, prove a permanent study, and one which shall not lose one jot of its popularity in the years to come. A systematic study of its every phase will certainly be one step toward the Philatelic millennium.

Written for THE CANADIAN PHILATELIST.

CHARLEY'S MISFORTUNE.

BY W. J. SABOURIN.

CHARLEY TURNER, a friend of mine, is an enthusiastic stamp collector, and when ill-luck sometimes follows him he is one of the most curious men I ever met. It is impossible to speak a word of stamp matter when something disgraceful has happened him some way. He would send you to your corner or say words which are not, I might admit, quite exemplary. Anyhow he is built like that, and years to come will not change him a bit. I felt so glad the other day over one of his misfortunes that I cannot abstain from telling the story.

Six months ago a fellow named Dorset came to one of Charley's friends and asked him how much a million stamps were worth, the other, who was also a collector, made him a lot of questions and finally said that \$10 would be a fair price to pay for them anyway. Charley, who was working at the same place, on hearing the conversation inquired into the matter and decided to borrow the money and buy the whole lot the following week.

Dorset immediately wrote a few words to the woman who possessed the stamps in question, and living in York. He asked her to keep them for his friend if she was willing to accept the price agreed upon first. The next day he got the following letter:

York, October 15th, 1893.

DEAR SIR: Since writing you last I have been offered \$25 for my stamps. Please let me know if you will give more.

Yours truly,

Mrs. L. —.

Charley was looking through his album when Dorset entered the room. It was only when the latter said "how are you Charley" that he lifted up his head. Thinking that there was good news about the stamps he was up in one second. He got so excited that an inkstand, placed on his desk, was upset while he was removing, and his Siebeck's issues were doomed. Dorset, knowing what kind of a fellow he was to meet, went to the door but his friend called him to know the result of his correspondence. After a few minutes conversation Charley decided not to take them.

"May be you are missing a snap," said Dorset.
"What kind of stamps are they anyhow?" inquired Charley.

"Don't know the first thing about 'em."

"Well, do you think I am going to pay such a price? This woman is trying to play something on us I'm sure. Who knows? You can drop it for I don't intend to buy a couple of barrels of continentals. I have no use for such trash." And Charley, without a word of thanks, returned to his album, trying to make all right the page of Seebecks.

Dorset quickly disappeared from the room and went to his house without even looking at passers-by. He had the idea to write again and get all the information required from the old woman.